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We wish also to thank Paul Velguth and Sydney Rawson for their untiring efforts and excellent taste in choosing musical accompaniment for the series.

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FOREWORD

The motion picture has now a fifty year history. It has reached full growth as mass entertainment. In technique the cinema has reached maturity - if by technique we mean the resources of the movie camera and the processes necessary for the recording of the illustrations that tell a story or represent reality. But it has only rarely achieved the truly creative art form which it seemed to promise from the beginning to the occasional artists stirred by its possibilities.

The Series described and discussed here review the high points of the motion picture as an art form. It starts from the crude beginnings in which the very struggle with the medium intensified the creative aspects of the product, and includes a selected sampling of recent experiments of various kinds in the use of the camera as an instrument for art expression.

For some 10 years, ever since important films of the past first became available, the San Francisco Museum of Art has explored the motion picture as an art form. Its interest is based on the conviction that the motion picture is, at least potentially, an authentic art of our time. Various types of Museum Programs have regularly placed before the public films of artistic, technical, and historical importance. But never previously has the Museum been able to give a film series that so nearly coincides with what it endeavors to do in its exhibitions: keep the public in close and constant contact with the "growing edge" of creative living art. That it has been able to do so now it owes to the interest, knowledge, initiative and industry of a group of young enthusiasts, headed by Richard Foster, Frank Stauffacher and George Leite, who have done the real work of organizing the material, in some cases tracking it down, and in assembling the documentation published here. The Museum believes the series Art in Cinema and this publication accompanying it are a useful contribution to the serious study of the motion picture in its creative aspects and possibilities. It appreciates the aid of all those interested have given, and it is encouraged by the support from the group formed into the Art in Cinema Society without whom no such ambitious venture would have been possible. It hopes such programs as this will aid in giving recognition to those whose work in cinema is of an authentically creative kind, and in building up a well informed public, exigent and aware, where artistic quality is concerned.

GRACE L. McCANN MORLEY

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

There seems to be a post-war revival of interest in the experimental film. In Paris, Jean Cocteau has finished his surrealist fairy tale, La Belle et la Bete. In New York, Hans Richter is putting the finishing touches on Dreams That Money Can Buy, with scenarios by Fernand Leger, Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, Max Ernst and Alexander Calder. In San Francisco, Sydney Peterson and James Broughton have completed their psychological fantasy, The Potted Psalm. The films of Maya Deren, made with a simple 16 mm. home movie camera, and at a cost less than that of a week-end in Bermuda, are evoking the praise of critics and public wherever they are shown. With the perfection and availability of inexpensive equipment, more and more independent artists and intelligent amateurs are exploring the infinite resources of the film as a medium of personal expression, trying to catch flashing across the screen that ephemeral moment when light and shadow fuse with movement to release an emotion that could arise from no other art.

Yet, historically, the experimental film suffers from a kind of neurosis: It has never been a money-maker; it has never really had anything to do with money - except the rather important matter of its production cost. The history of the motion picture is written almost entirely in terms of financial investment because it exists on the back of the commercial film, and if there had not been the commercial film, there could not have been the Avantgarde. Thus we find it occupying a meagre place in all historical works on the films. But perhaps we have reached a point in cinema's development where, equipment and technique being perfected to a degree, we will find more attention spent upon the inherent capacities of the film as art. Perhaps it is time to reexamine those small brave attempts at artistic experimentation in the past that have so often been called pastiche and frivolous, and accused of being outside the main development of cinema. Perhaps we yet may find, in years to come, that these experiments were more in the main development than we thought.

It is with this in mind that we have attempted to catalogue and bring together for public showing, these restless, hybrid aspects of the film's history. We have by no means as yet exhausted the field. But the very difficulty of seeking out the sources, and here and there uncovering some fine unknown fragment, will be justified if the reasonably large body of interested people - who we expect does exist - can examine these films for themselves.

Since an interest in a non-commercial venture needs a non-commercial center for its expression, the logical center in San Francisco is the San Francisco Museum of Art. With the help of the Museum staff and the co-sponsors, Mr. Douglas Mac Agy of the California School of Fine Arts and George Leite, publisher and editor of Circle Magazine, an interested and critical audience has been assembled for this series. All proceeds beyond basic expenses have been allocated to those artists currently working in this form of cinema who have loaned their films or who have otherwise helped to make the series a success. Through the medium of the Art in Cinema Society, subsequent series of this kind will be arranged for showings at the Museum and elsewhere in the San Francisco area.

RICHARD FOSTER
FRANK STAUFFACHER

San Francisco, October 1946

INTRODUCTION

The Red Herring and the Diamond-backed Terrapin

The red herring, as Michael Fraenkel would say, is death.

Let no one imagine that the showing of these films will bring about a revolution in the cinema world. Nothing can accomplish such a miracle except a complete change in our way of life. Though we have crossed the threshold of a technological era whose possibilities are beyond all prediction, the cinema shows no startling signs of improvement. From the technical standpoint we are supposed to produce the best pictures in the world. Technically speaking, we are the master race. But art and technics are not twins. As technic advances art languished. In the middle of the gulf of nothingness the red herring, which is always death, performs le grand ecart.

Many of the films, shown now for the first time to an American audience, were made a generation or two ago. The best among them were made with little money and meagre equipment. Most of them are now classics, having passed the test of time without benefit of box office. For this reason, and solely for this reason, we refer to them now and henceforth as diamond-backed terrapin.

Of what are these young films dreaming? Do they dream with mirrored surfaces reflecting only the torpor of life? Is art merely the reflection of life? At what level does art begin to transmogrify life? An eastern myth has it that the universe is supported on the back of a huge tortoise. It says nothing about the tortoise performing acrobatic stunts. The tortoise simply swims in the wake of creation. In similar fashion life may be said to sustain art. Where we seek reflection only, there we find the red herring.

The experimental film, called such only because it dares to lie to the mirror, is not the ultimate in film art. It is only a tentative, faltering step in the direction of the unexplored. Thus far the medium of the film has scarcely been penetrated. It is still an uncharted ocean bounded by we know not what strange shores. Undoubtedly there exists a world, cinematic in texture and contour, as marvelous and inexhaustible as any known to the poet or mystic. It is a world which, once discovered, will alter the very atmosphere we breathe. Its cardinal element is fantasy. It manifests itself whenever the imagination liberates itself from the thralls of the intellect.

The danger of fantasy is that it nourishes the dream. This is also its virtue, since dream and symbol are the very pillars of life. Awake we swim in the dead sea, our movements regulated by fear and anxiety. Once the lid is closed the eye opens on a world in which we are at home, because we are last free. This freedom expresses itself through endless metamorphoses. How static then appears the waking world! What we regarded as life assumes the attributes of death. Over every semblance of rigidity the red herring smears its slimy trail. The familiar everyday world becomes the void in which our clumsy creations are rooted like crumbling monuments of the past.

On whose back do we move so effortlessly in dream? Whence these boreal effects unregistered by any camera? On what mysterious screen float these swarms of undirected images? Or is there a silent and invisible director? And who collaborates with whom?

We ask these questions not in order to provoke the suppressive logic of the rational mind, which demands an answer to every question, but to stimulate quest. We ask in order to invoke more difficult images, and to meet them not with words but with action. The exploration of the cinematic world is fraught with even greater consequences than the exploration of the physical world. In the depths of that vast ocean which Columbus traversed are hidden mysteries greater than any imagined by those who vainly tried to imagine the New World which he discovered. In the depths of matter lie incalculable airy realms unsuspected by the devotees of the spirit world. So too, in this world which with our waking eyes we rigidly take for granted, there are possibilities of metamorphosis, from the most demonic to the sublime, which only the play of fantasy can bring to light. And the cinema, of all the arts, possesses the means for exploiting this element of fantasy to the utmost limit. On the screen we can sit inside and outside ourselves at the same time. The veil between dream and reality, when suffused with light, is capable of yielding the modulations of the spirit which animates all life.

Exhausted by longing, the spirit of man strives perpetually to surrender its burden through wonder. The organ of the soul is the eye which, having beheld its creation, sees the significance of that which it originally longed to behold. A third eye renders back the wonder which surrounds the meaning of creation. Only the blind can express true longing, just as the seer can express only ecstasy. Entering the realm of vision we move with the fleet harmony of angels. Wonder expands the inner orb, making it wax like a golden moon. At the full the darkest recesses of the soul are illumined. It is then we sustain, with our breath merely, the changeless universe in which form and image obey the ceaseless logic of dream.

HENRY MILLER
Big Sur, California

HANS RICHTER: A History of the Avantgarde

In the ten years between '21 and '31 there developed an independent artistic movement in cinematography. This movement was called Avantgarde. It was the only independent artistic movement in the history of cinematography until today. This art movement in film was parallel to such movements in plastic art as Expressionism, Futurism, Cubism and Dadaism. It was non-commercial, non representational, but international. It included artists from eleven countries; Australia, Belgium, England, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Spain Sweden, U.S.S.R., and the United States.

THE GENERAL POST-WAR SITUATION IN EUROPE WHICH CREATED THE AVANTGARDE FILM

1. Political and Economic Unrest

Europe after the first war was taut with economic, social, political and cultural unrest. Revolutions all over the Continent had loosened traditions and opened the mind for new things. It was a period of readjustment to the new sets of standards which came as a consequence of the war; a short but creative interval between two big wars, comparable to the time of Pericles which preceded the destruction of Greece.

The economic situation changed every day. Inflations were expanding and exploding all throughout Europe and in their wake came a rather hectic prosperity, which lasted until the end of 1929. Every body lived to the hilt. New ideas were accepted, even desired.

2. The Opposition Against Conventional Film Routine

The Cinema after the first world war made great strides technically, but psychologically and artistically it did not keep pace with the times. The French writers, Canudo (of Italian descendants) and Delluc, later Epstein and Moussinac, opposed the conventional routine of the commercial film; the "canned" theatre. They tried to create an esthetic standard for the film. It was the time of the discovery of the "soul of the camera." They realized that the film could not depend exclusively on the actor, the novel and the play, and that in order to develop further it had to create its own plastic expression. Therefore it was necessary to understand the nature of the lenses, the artistic possibilities of the emulsion, the variations in speed which could lead to a new creative expression, the rhythm; the limitations and possibilities of the mechanic - the spirit of the machine. Delluc's "Photogeny" became a measure for good and bad in film.

Clubs (Cine Club de France, 1926), Leagues (Film League in Holland, 1926, and in Germany, 1930), Film Societies (England, 1926), Public Organizations all over Europe were founded and flourished. They proved that there was an audience for a different type of film from those which the film companies were delivering. The result was that the new little Playhouses, which sprang up all over the continent, concentrated their energies on Avantgarde productions.

The first Avantgarde theatre in Europe was a part of an old monastery of the Ursuline order in the Latin Quarter of Paris, which Armand Tallier rented for less than twenty dollars a year. In 1925 he opened the "Cinema des Ursulines." "Cinema Latin," "Studio 28", and others soon followed. Similar theatres opened in Holland ("Uitkyk"), Germany ("Kamera"), Switzerland, Poland, Belgium and and finally all over Europe. These Playhouses meant business for their owners and for the Avantgarde film producers.

3. The Artistic Climate of Europe

Cubism, Expressionism, Dadaism and Abstract Art characterized at this time the art movements in Europe. The more self-confident Modern Art became, the more it wanted to influence the form of the other plastic arts with its new plastic experience. Dance and Theatre were relatively easily inspired, as they were traditionally accustomed to artistic changes, but it was quite another thing to influence the youngest art: film. In the first place film was strictly technically conditioned, still in its first experimental stage and altogether too much occupied by its own particular technical problems. In the second place it had no artistic tradition whatever. However, it was inevitable that, sooner or later, a territory of such tremendous plastic possibilities as the film would be "infected" by these new expressions. For the film was as much a product of our times as modern art.

The actual approach came from two different sides of modern art: at first from Abstract Art and then from Cubism. The process of dissolution of the natural object in Cubism led to the free form: the form liberated from its photographic "appearance". (the art growing out of this historical step was called "abstract art" - an art which no longer had a natural object.) Even after the Cubists had dissolved the limitations of the object they kept their relationship to it. (However this relationship was only the exterior, not the interior characteristics of Cubism.) It should also be realized that Cubism did not signify only the dissolution of the object, this was an accidental liberation resulting from a still stronger impulse. The real historical impulse, the one which forced the Cubist painters out of the beautiful organical world of Impressionism, into a world of architectonic forms, came from the vision of a style whose elements had still to be found. The individualistic viewpoint of Impressionism: "Nature Interpreted by Temperament," was now replaced by the objective research for the principles of this style. They no longer studied the natural appearance of the object, its flair, its atmosphere, instead they sought for its "plastic value," for the very elements responsible for its creation. (Cezanne saw that every form in nature is based upon an elementary form as sphere, oval, square, etc.) In this direction went the Cubists and in their footsteps followed "Abstract Art", but eventually it developed a more undconditioned form of expression than Cubism had discovered. The general tendency of Abstract Art was to overcome pure individualistic emotional expression and to find instead the way for the expression of universal feeling. The uncontrolled richness of (abstract) forms which had so abruptly beaten down upon the painters had to be controlled, as the forms alone no longer held any special significance when separated from their conventional background. Thus the actual pass-word of Abstract Art became elimination of the uncontrolled, creation of norms, discipline and control of the whole. The further this elimination went, the simpler became the relationship of the rest of the forms.

The controlled relationship of forms to others contained potentially already an approach to films, in picture sequences (variations). In Viking Eggeling's studies of an "Orchestration of the Line," sequences (on isolated canvases or sheets of paper) already contained latently the medium: time. In 1919 they found their adequate form in Scroll paintings (Viking Eggeling and Hans Richter,

1919-1920) which united sequences of variations in one long scroll. It became only a matter of consequence and artistic logic to take the next step into real movement!

These static sequences of dynamic themes were put into film in 1921 (Eggeling's "Diagonal Symphony", and Richter's "Rhythm 21"). It was the first attempt to create relationship between plastic forms in movement. The other line was also started by a modern painter: Fernand Leger.

Leger was one of the Cubists of the first hour. Contrary to Delaunay, who finally left the "object" for good, Leger, kept to the object and seldom risked departure from the solid world of existent things. Here he tried to solve in his way the problem of the style, a style which would encompass the objective reality containing the experience of our times. "The war had thrust me, as a soldier, into the heart of a mechanical atmosphere, In this atmosphere I discovered the beauty of the fragment I sensed a new reality in the detail of a machine, in the common object. I tried to find the plastic value of these fragments of our modern life. I rediscovered them on the Screen in the close-ups of objects, which impressed and influenced me. However, I felt that one could make their expression much stronger. In 1923 I decided to "frame" the beauty of this undiscovered world in the film. In this medium I worked as I had done before in painting. To create the rhythm of common objects in space and time, to present them in their plastic beauty, this seemed to me worthwhile. This was the origin of my Ballet Mecanique."

4. The Influence of New Technique and New Art on the Public

From another side there came a loosening of the conventional way. The vision of every generation is different from the foregoing one, but the phenomenal growth of Mechanical and Energetical technique during the last fifty years made us see things our grandfathers never dreamed about. Gradually more and more people became aware that machines and techniques did not mean only rationalistic things; production and comfort; but their speed, their rhythm, their pattern added a new appeal to life, a new beauty.

1921

VIKING EGCELING, painter

Born in Lund, Sweden, 1880. Died May 19th, 1925.

Diagonal Symphony - Orchestration of abstract forms, 1921.

Silent short.

HANS RICHTER, painter

Born in Germany (Berlin), 1888. Lives in New York

Rhythm 21 - Orchestration of abstract forms, 1921. Silent short.

Rhythm 23 and 25 - Silent - Orchestration of abstract forms.

Film Study 1926 1926 - Abstract forms related to and transformed in objects. Silent short.

Inflation 1927 - First film essay (about the inflation in Germany). Produced for Ufa as an introduction to The Lady With the Mask). Silent Short.

Ghosts Before Noon 1927-28 - Burlesque of revolting objects. Silent, but later made as a sound short with a score by Paul Hindemith.

Race Symphony 1928 - Impressionistic sequence about a horse race (Documentary produced for Maxim-Emelka, Berlin, as an introduction for Ariadne in Hoppegarten). Silent short.

Everything Revolves 1929 - Burlesque of a Fair. Sound - 3 reels. Richter continued as a documentary and experimental film producer; From Lightning to Television - The Conquest of the Sky - Stock Exchange, etc.

Dreams That Money Can Buy 1944-46 - Produced for Art of This Century Films Inc. by Hans Richter in cooperation with Alexander Calder, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Fernand Leger and Man Ray. Ten reels, with original score by Darius Milhaud, John Cage, Paul Bowles, Edgar Verese, etc.

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1922

WALTER RUTTMAN, painter

Born about 1890 in Germany. Died 1941 on the German front in Russia. Opus 1,2,3,4, etc. - Improvisations with abstract forms. 1922-25, silent.

Berlin - Impressionist symphony of a great city. Silent feature, with a score by Edmund Meisel.

Weekend 1928 - Associations with sound heard on a weekend. Sound track only. No picture. Short.

Sounding Waves 1928 - Symphony of the power of radio. Sound feature.

Melody of the World 1929 - Impressionistic symphony about a trip around the world. Sound feature.

Ruttman continued as a documentary film producer: Steel - "A small film of a big city." Hamburg, etc.

1923

RENE CLAIR, started as a writer

Born about 1900 in Paris, France, lives in Paris.

Paris qui Dort 1923 - Comical film using slow motion and high speed in streets of Paris. Silent - 4 reels.

Entr'acte 1924 - (in collaboration with the painters Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia.) Fantastic story of a funeral in different rhythms. Silent - 2 reels.

The Italian Straw Hat 1928-29 - Story of a straw hat and a wedding. Silent feature.

Clair continued as a feature film producer: Sons les Toits de Paris - Le Million - A Nous la Liberte - Ghost Goes West - I Married a Witch, etc.

1923-'24

FERNAND LEGER, painter

Born in Argentan, France, 1881, lives in New York. Ballet Mecanique

1924 - Rhythmical play of objects without story. Silent, 2 reels.

1924

CLAUDE AUTANT LARRA, writer

Born about 1890 in France. Lives in France.

Faits Divers 1924 - Drama in close-ups. Silent short.

How to Make a Fire (after Jack London) 28/29. Experiment using a large film, 45 mm., divided into 3 pictures, showing 3 scenes simultaneously. Two reels.

1925

JENN RENOIR, started as an actor

Born in 1894 in France. Lives in Hollywood.

La fille de l'eau 1925 - Story film using the artistic expressions of the camera. Silent feature.

Nana 1926 - Interpretation of Zola's book with Katherine Hepburn. Silent feature.

The Girl with the Matches - Silent feature.

Renoir continued as a producer of feature films: Grand illusion - La Marseillaise - La Regle du Jeu, etc.

HENRI CHOMETTE, writer (brother of Rene Clair)

Born about 1890 in Paris, France. Died about 1938.

Crystals 1925 - Rhythmical play of the beauty of crystal reflections.

Five minutes of pure cinema. Silent short.

Reflections and Speeds - (Chomette-Beaumont) Rhythms of Paris.

Silent - 2-3 reels.

1926

ALBERTO CALVALCANTI, started as an architect painter

Born in Brazil, 1897, now lives in London.

P'tite Lily 1926 - Film visualizing a Parisian folk song. (Burlesque with unhappy ending). Silent, later, in 1929, a sound film with score of Darius Milhaud.

Rien que les Heures 26/27 - Dramatic cross section of 24 hours in Paris. Silent feature.

En Rade 1928 - Sentimental document of a harbor. Silent feature.

Calvanti continued as a documentary film producer for the General Post Office and the B.T.O., London: Night Mail - Spring Offensive - Squadron 992, etc.

MAN RAY, painter, photographer

Born in 1890 in Philadelphia, Pa. Lives in Hollywood.

Le Retour a la Raison 1923 - First film, made overnight for a Dada soiree. Silent, one reel.

Emak Bakia 1926 - Surrealistic sequence of associations. Rhythms with objects. Silent, one reel.

L'Etoile de Mer 1928 - Translation into visual imagery of a love poem by Robert Desnos. Silent, one reel.

Les Mysteres du Chateau du De 1929 - Surrealist visit to an elegant villa. Silent, one reel.

1927

MARCEL DUCHAMP, painter

Born 1887 in Blainville, France. Lives in New York

Anaemic Cinema 1927 - Compositions of moving spirals composed together with spiralic poetic sentences. Silent short.

JORIS IVENS, started as a photographer

Born 1898 in Holland. Lives in New York.

The Bridge 1927 - Rhythmical...Documentary, about the construction of the Maass bridge in Rotterdam. Silent, 2 reels.

Rain 1928 -29 - Documentary film made in collaboration with Mannus Francken. Poetical film about the waves thundering against the Dutch coast. Silent short.

Zuydersee 1927-1933 - Dramatic picture of the drying of part of the North Sea and its cosial failure. Silent feature, later sound film with the score of Hans Eisler.

Ivens continued as a director of documentary films: Borinage, in collaboration with Henri Storck, Brussels - Spanish Earth - 400, -ooo,ooo - The Power and the Land, etc.

1928

GERMAINE DULAC

Born about 1890 in France. Died in 1942 in France.

The Smiling Madame Beudet 1922 - A psychological study of domestic conflicts. Silent feature

The Seashell and the Clergyman 1928 - A psychoanalytical film about the inferiority complexes of a clergyman. Silent feature. ~~Arabesque~~
Arabesque 1930-31 - Several abstract poems of forms. Silent. Germaine Dulac continued as a newsreel director for "France Actualitees."

EUGENE DESLAW

Born about 1890 in Belgium.
The March of the Machines - Dramatic poem of the rhythm of machines. Silent short. 1928.
Electric Night - Poem of the light. Silent short.
Montparnasse - Impressions of a Paris quarter. Silent short.

LEN LYE, started as a painter

Born in 1901 in New Zealand.
Abstraction (?) 1928 - Dramatic play of abstract, organical form. Silent short.
Color Box 1935 and Rainbow Dances 1936 - Artistic propaganda films in color, hand painted for the General Post Office in England. Short
Lambeth Walk 1941 - Hand-painted rhythmical abstract musical short.

Under the pressure of public interest created by the Film Leagues, some of the most important Dutch newspapers accepted members of the Avantgarde organization as critics of their papers. Thus Holland built up one of the most advanced and independent circles of film critics in the world. These critics, educated in the modern art of film, had grown up and fought for new forms of expression. Modern Art became a symbol of emancipation from conventional limitations, a fundamental rebirth which everybody anticipated after the years of disruption and isolation.

1929

International Film Congress of the independent film (Avantgarde) met in La Sarras, Switzerland, in August in the old castle of Mme. de Mandrot. There were delegations from 14 countries. Eisenstein and his collaborators were present too.

RALPH STEINER, painter

Born 1899 in Cleveland, Ohio. Lives in New York.
H₂O 1929 - Rhythms and textures of water. Silent short.

JEAN VIGO, writer

Born about 1905 in France. Died in 1934.
A Propos de Nice 1929 - In collaboration with Boris Kauffmann - Social, critical observation of snobbery and poverty in Nice. Documentary style. Silent, 2-3 reels.
L'Atalante 1934 - Fantastic, dramatic story of a trailer. Sound feature.
Zero de Conduite 1935 - Realistic critical picture about life and character of children. Children seen through the eyes of children. Sound feature.

LACOMBE, student of Rene Clair

Born in 1900 in France. Lives in France.
La Zone 1929 - Document about a market in the suburbs of Paris. Two-three reels.
Lacombe continued as a documentary film producer.

LUIS BUNUEL, writer

Born in 1900 in Spain. Lives in Hollywood.
Un Chien Andalou 1929 - Surrealistic picture (without any dog). Silent, 2 reels.

L'Age d'Or 1930 - First surrealist long feature film. Violent realistic story of sex and inhibitions. Sound. Score, Bunuel.
Land Without Bread 1932 - Dramatic documentary about disastrous living and social conditions in Spain. Sound feature.

KENNETH MAC PHERSON, writer

Born about 1900 in England. Lives in New York.
Foothills 1929 - Psychoanalytical film about a sophisticated woman who came to live in a small village. Silent feature.
Monkey's Moon 1930 - Fantasy of escaping monkeys. Silent, 1 reel.
Borderline 1931 - Psychoanalytical film about the love between a negro and a white woman; with Paul Robeson. Silent feature.
Publisher of "Close-up" - British progressive film magazine.

HERMAN G. WEINBERG, writer

Born 1908, New York.
City Symphony 1929 - Impressions of New York. Silent, 1 reel.
Autumn Fire 1930 - Lyrical film poem. Romantic love story of separated loves told in a series of natural symbols - clouds, trees, water, etc.-expressing moods.

1930

JEAN COCTEAU, poet and painter

Born about 1895 in France. Lives in Paris.
The Blood of a Poet 1930 - Surrealistic feature film in episodes, observing the life of the author. Sound.

OSKAR FISCHINGER, started as a painter.

Born about 1900 in Germany. Lives in Hollywood. Made his first abstract attempt in Ruttmann's film, Melody of the World 1929. Film consists of different abstract compositions as illustrations of classical and modern music. All sound films.
Studies No. 1 to 12 - 1928-30. Black and white shorts.
Coloratura 1931- Black and white short.
Composition in Blue 1933 - Color abstract to The Merry Wives of Windsor, by Nicolay. Short.
Circle 1933 - Color abstract to music by Wagner. Short.
Allegretto 1936 - Color short.
Optical Poem 1937 - Made for MGM. Sound short to Liszt's second Hungarian Rhapsody. In technicolor.
An American March 1939 - A sound short in technicolor.

FRANCIS BRUGIER, painter

Born about 1890. Belgian.
Light Rhythms 1930 - Film using three-dimensional abstract forms cut in paper. Movements created by moving the light, not the objects. Sound short.
The International Film Congress of the Independent Film (Avant-garde) met in Brussels in November. The Avantgarde as a purely artistic movement had passed its climax and was on its way to concentrating on the social and political film, mainly in documentary form.
The Avantgarde Expires as an Independent Film Movement.
1931 marked the end of the Avantgarde because of the following reasons:

1. The political situation in Europe grew tenser every month and the Avantgarde poetry no longer seemed to be suitable. This the artist felt as well as the public. (Congress-Brussels, 1930)
2. The Avantgarde artists no longer wanted to make their films as an artistic experiment but as a full time job to deal with the social, political and human ideas of their time.
3. The dawn of the sound film absorbed public interests, and the enormous expenses of the sound recording definitely cut down any

any independent individual production. Most of the Avantgarde producers found their way into the documentary film. In this type of film creative plastic expression might be of special advantage, once in a while, and because, unlike the feature films, documentary film is not subordinated to the actor.

Practical Results of the Avantgarde Film Work

The influence the Avantgarde exercised upon feature film production in Europe went through different channels:

1. Part of the Avantgarde artists became engaged either temporarily or permanently in the film industry.
2. A small number of them specialized in detail work (abstract scenes in feature films, or advertising).
3. However, most of the artistic experiences and forms were taken over by the big industries who transformed the spontaneous experiences of the Avantgarde into solid production schemes.

During the ten years of its development the conditions WHICH had led to the Avantgarde film movement all changed, only one remained: Modern Art. The problem of artistic articulation in the medium of film is not yet solved. The same dream of new beauty which inspired the generation of artists from 1921 to 1931 inspires artists today. There is no Avantgarde film movement any more but as long as Modern Art exists, the problems of the experimental film will remain.

1936

MARY ELLEN BUTE

Born 1909 in Houston, Texas, and

THEODORE NEMETH, painter

Born 1900 in Cambridge, Mass. Live in New York.

Rhythm in Light 1936 - Abstract rhythm. Sound short.

Synchrony No. 2 1936 - Abstract rhythm/ Sound short.

Parabola 1938 (with Rutherford Boyd) - Abstract rhythm. Sound short.

Escape 1940 - Dramatic scene with geometric figures. Sound short. Color.

Tarantella 1941 - Abstract film in color.

Spools Sport 1941 - Abstract film with organic forms. Sound. Color.

1938

DOUGLASS CROCKWELL, painter

Born United States. Lives in Glen Falls, New York.

Fantasmagoria 1 1938 - 11 '39 - 111 '40 - Glen Falls Sequence-

Three dimensional organic forms, glass effects. Shorts.

1939

GLORIA AND EMLIN ETTING, painters

Born in 1904 in Philadelphia, Pa. Live in Haverford, Pa.

Laureate, A Film Poem 1939 - Silent. Color, 243 reels

NORMAN MAC LAREN, student of Len Lye

Born about 1910 in Scotland. Lives in Ottawa, Canada.

Loops 1939 - Abstract hand colored, hand drawn film. Sound short.

Stars and Stripes 1940 - Color phantasy about the American Flag. Sound short.

Mac Laren works for the Canadian National Film Board, making abstract propaganda films and musical shorts.

1940

DWINELL GRANT, painter

Born in Springfield, Ohio, in 1912. Lives in New York.

Themis, 1940 - Non-object study in color. Silent short.

Contrathemis 1941 - Two dimensional experience in thematic development.
Color. Silent short.

Three dimensional Experiments 1945 - Color. Silent.

MYION MERIAM, painter

Born in Brooklyn, New York, about 1900. Lives in Washington. Abstract films:
Point focus photography. 1941/42.

1944-46

MAYA DEREN - Born America, lives in New York

Meshes of the Afternoon 1943 - In collaboration with Alexander Hammid. A film dealing with a subconscious experience. Silent, one reel.

At land 1944 - A film in the nature of an inverted Odyssey.

A Study in Choreography for Camera 1945 - With Tally Beatty. The dancer in space created by the camera. Silent short.

Ritual in Transfigured Time 1945 - A film ritual that undertakes to create its own space, time and reality.

JOHN AND JAMES WHITNEY, technician and painter

Born America. Live in Hollywood.

Film Exerciese 1 to 5. 1943-45- Abstract forms complemented by sound produced on the sound track synthetically. Experiments in audio-visual music.

SYDNEY PETERSON, painter, photographer, and

JAMES BROUGHTON, playwright. Both live in San Francisco.

The Potted Psalm 1946 - A cinematic experiment in exploring a psychological case.

In the meantime, complimentary to the Avantgarde Movement, there had been developed another medium which dealt with the same esthetic problem. Rosinee, Russian born, demonstrated in about 1925 in Berlin, and later on in Paris, an instrument with which colors and forms could be freely and voluntarily moved and changed. It was used in some Playhouses regularly as Entr'actes and showed sequences of abstract forms in pure colors.

Lazlo in London experimented about the same time with his "color piano" for the same purpose, and so did Thomas Wilfred in the United States. Wilfred's "color Organ" became the most perfect instrument of this kind. The results of these efforts are fascinating, actually more from the technical than from the artistic standpoint. However they have practically the same unlimited possibilities for a painter as a piano has for the pianist. There is no doubt that such free articulation and composition of forms and colors opens up wider fields for the creative imagination. Undoubtedly in the coming time of television there will be a chance of using such machines and their use may develop their artistic expression, if artists are going to play them.

The Avant garde Movement may be historically regarded as an outgrowth of Modern Art, even if it belongs technically to the film. For the latter it has played the very necessary role of an experimental laboratory. This is the only time that the film has had an artistic laboratory. Today it has none. Needless to say experimentation leads to a new unfolding of techniques, to new and more comprehensive fields of expression and style. To keep in stride with the swift pace of these times, to be vitalized and revitalized by the exciting psychological and physical developments of our century, it is essential that the film have a field in which the struggle toward a more complete fulfillment of its talents may be carried on. Free artistic experiment has had no place in the film production of today. It ~~should have~~ should have.

ELIE FAURE: The Art of Cineplastics

(Editor's Note: Although most of the material in this booklet has been prepared exclusively for it, the following selection is one important exception. It is composed of excerpts from a much longer work, the first intelligent critical survey of cinematic esthetics, a series of essays by Elie Faure which appeared in English in the pages of "The Freeman" (New York) 1918-19, and were republished in 1923 by The Four Seas Press of Boston under the title "The Art of Cineplastics," here reprinted by permission of Bruce Humphries, Inc., Boston. Their interest lies in the fact that the great historian who understood ~~so profoundly~~ so profoundly the spirit that animates all art, recognized the esthetic possibilities of the cinema at a time when it was not only suffering its most harsh growing pains, but from the contempt of most serious thinkers, as well.)

I remember the unexpected emotions I received, seven or eight years before the war, from certain films the scenarios of which as it happened, were of incredible silliness. The revelation of what the cinema of the future can be came to me one day; I retain an exact memory of it, of the commotion that I experienced when I observed in a flash, the magnificence there was in the relationship of a piece of black clothing to the grey wall of an inn. From that moment I paid no more attention to the martyrdom of the poor woman, who was condemned, in order to save her husband from dishonor, to give herself to the lascivious banker who had previously murdered her mother and debauched her child. I discovered with increasing astonishment, that, thanks to the tone-relations that were transforming the film for me in a system of colors scaling from white to black and ceaselessly commingled, moving, changing on the surface and in the depths of the screen, I was witnessing a sudden coming to life, a descent into that host of personages whom I had already seen - motionless - on the canvases of Greco, Frans Hals, Rembrandt, Velasquez, Vermeer, Courbet, Manet. I do not set these names down at random, the last two especially. They are those the cinema suggested to me from the first.

Later, as the medium of the screen was perfected from day to day, as my eye became accustomed to these strange works, other memories associated themselves with the earlier ones, till I no longer needed to appeal to my memory and invoke familiar paintings in order to justify the new plastic impressions that I got at the cinema. Their elements, their complexity which varies and winds in a continuous movement, the constantly unexpected things imposed on the work by its mobile composition, ceaselessly renewed, ceaselessly broken and remade, fading away and reviving and breaking down, monumental for one flashing instant, impressionistic the second following - all this constitutes a phenomenon too radically new for us even to dream of classing it with painting, or with sculpture or with the dance, least of all with the modern theatre. It is an unknown art that is beginning.....

I would point out the immense resources which, independent of the acting of the cinemimics, are beginning to be drawn from their multiple and incessantly modified relationships with the surroundings, the landscape, the calm, the fury and the caprice of the elements, from natural or artificial lighting, from the prodigiously complex and shaded play of values, from precipitate or retarded movements, such as the slow movements of those galloping horses which seem to be made of living bronze, or those running dogs whose whose muscular contractions recall the undulations of reptiles. I would point out too, the profound universe

Roger J. Ferragallo
c/o Chicago Art Institute
Michigan and Adams
Chicago, Illinois

San Francisco Museum of Art
Avant Garde Film

Attn: Mr. Frank Stauffacher.

Dear Mr. Stauffacher:

I recently had the pleasure of seeing three films from your department: The Expressionist film, "Zig-Zag"; "Five Excercises" by the Whitney Brothers; and the Surrealist film, "Mothers Day", by James Broughton. At the Seminar of the 58th Annual Exhibition of Abstract and Surrealist Art here at the Chicago Art Institute, I saw: Duchamp's "Rotoreliefs"; Steiners, "H₂O"; Nagy's, "Black, Grey and White"; and Cocteau's, "The Blood of a Poet".

The combine of these influences resulted in my taking a great interest in this medium. I have several projects of my own in mind and am about to start experimenting. Before I did I thought it would be best to contact you in hopes you could lead me to a source of information; or if you have information at hand--help from you.

What kind of organization is the "Avant Garde Film" of the Museum? Are you experimenting along these lines or do you purchase and sponsor abstract films? Is it possible to secure information about the making of the films or of the equipment used? Could a contact be established with someone now experimenting in the medium? Can your films be rented for study?

Sorry to fire so many questions but I am hopeful a few can be answered. Whatever help you could offer me would be of great assistance and would be heartfully appreciated.

Respectfully yours,

Roger J. Ferragallo

Mr. Amos Vogel
Cinema 16, Inc.
59 Park Avenue
New York 16, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Vogel:

I warrant and represent that I am the sole and absolute owner of all rights of any nature to the motion picture entitled

ZIG ZAG

throughout the world, including exhibition and distribution rights, and of all negatives and prints thereof, story, scenario, continuity, book, script, literary dialogue, music rights and copyright therein and thereto, and that there shall be no liens or encumbrances thereon or claims against the same of any nature whatsoever.

I hereby grant you, for a period of five (5) years from this date, the sole and exclusive distribution rights, throughout the world, to said motion picture, including without limitation the right to reproduce and transmit the same by radio, television, and all other now existing or future improvements or devices which are now or may hereafter be used in connection with the production, transmission and/or exhibition or distribution of motion picture productions, and the right to lease, license or sub-license the exhibition or distribution of said motion picture and any of said rights.

The said distribution and exhibition rights will be exclusive with the exception of non-theatrical exhibitions and distributions in California made by the producer or by the Art in Cinema Society of the San Francisco Museum of Art. Neither the producer nor the Art in Cinema Society shall assign or transfer any of these rights to any other party. Theatrical exhibitions shall be the exclusive right of Cinema 16 in all states.

I agree to deliver at least one(1) and, if possible, as many prints as you may need without charge to you and you shall be entitled to possession of said prints or print throughout the term of this agreement.

During the term of this agreement, I, the owner, shall maintain the ownership of the original of this film, and shall give up neither the ownership nor the rights to this original to any other party.

Rental fees to be charged by you for the film are to be as follows:

Non-theatrical:	\$5.00	
Theatrical:	\$8.00	half rates for consecutive days

These fees do not include transportation fees, which are to be paid by the exhibitor.

You are to turn over 60% of all rental fees to me, and keep the remaining 40% for which you are to take care of clerical and other details connected with the booking, exhibiting and shipping of the film.

Rental fees for small groups or non-theatrical showings are to be worked by mutual agreement between us, with the same 60:40 division to prevail.

I also grant you an option for a period of one (1) year from the date of completion of the motion picture(s) now being produced by me, tentatively entitled to acquire the distribution rights for said picture(s) upon the same terms as embodied in the present agreement. Consideration for the granting of such option is one (\$1.00) dollar and other good and valuable consideration to me in hand paid by you, receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged. If you desire to exercise such option, you shall do so by sending a written notice to me within said one (1) year period advising me of the exercise of such option.

Your signature under the words "Agreed to" below, will constitute the foregoing an agreement between us.

Very truly yours,

Frank Stauffacher (L.S.)

"Agreed to"

Amos Vogel (L.S.)
Cinema 16, Inc.

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Cinema 16, Inc.
59 Park Avenue
New York 16, N. Y.

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I hereby grant you, for a period of five (5) years from this date, the sole and exclusive distribution rights, throughout the world, to said motion picture, including without limitation the right to reproduce and transmit the same by radio, television, and all other now existing or future improvements or devices which are now or may hereafter be used in connection with the production, transmission and/or exhibition or distribution of motion picture productions, and the right to lease, license or sub-license the exhibition or distribution of said motion picture and any of said rights.

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Your signature under the words "Agreed to" below, will constitute the foregoing an agreement between us.

Very truly yours,

Frank Stauffacher (L.S.)

"Agreed to"

Amos Vogel
Cinema 16, Inc. (L.S.)

Richard Graveson

78 Throckmorton
Mid Valley
✓

Monday

Dear Frank.

Just got your telegram
Several days late - from the
new school - it is closed for
summer -

Chester Kanker lives in
Los Angeles - Curtis Harrington
or Paul Ballard. Can
give you his address. I do
NOT know it - Sorry -

Curtis Tashy

479 - 6 - Ave -
N.Y. C.

the
seattle film society
presents
two series of films
1949-50

• purpose

THE aim of the Seattle Film Society is to foster the appreciation of the film as a creative art. By providing its members with programs of distinguished films—whether they be foreign or native, old or new, silent or sound—the Society believes it will gradually attract and build up a discriminating audience devoted to the best in cinematic art.

THE plan is to present films that are as varied as possible. All types and schools will be represented—namely, the fiction film, documentary, avant-garde, art, educational, travel, and others.

SINCE the war approximately 200 film societies have been organized in this country by people whose interest in the motion picture medium goes beyond the purely entertainment function of the commercial theater. Perhaps the most unique film group is Cinema 16, organized in New York City by Amos Vogel three years ago, which now has a membership of more than 2,500.

WE believe that a real need exists in Seattle for such an organization. So to all of you who recognize the film as a potent, worthwhile force in modern society, we cordially invite you to become members.

• becoming a member

TWO series of three programs each will be presented during the 1949-50 season. The winter series showings will be given in November, December, and January; the spring series in February, March, and April. Each program will consist of a feature film and from one to three shorts. Programs will be presented on the first Sunday of each month, running approximately two hours.

MEMBERSHIPS to the Seattle Film Society are \$2.50 per person for one series (three programs). As members you will be entitled to bring two guests to a performance free of charge. Tickets for single programs will not be sold. Only series memberships are available.

WE urge you to become a charter member of the Seattle Film Society, thus becoming a participant in the Society's activities during its initial year. Since only 300 seats are available, please do not delay. Fill out the enclosed application form and mail it with your check today. Memberships may also be purchased at the door on the opening night—if not already sold out.

• the films

Winter Series

November 6, 1949

NIGHT MAIL. Produced by John Grierson and directed by Harry Watt. One of the first productions of the documentary school. A film classic.

MAN OF ARAN. Directed by Robert Flaherty. Considered by many to be the greatest work of this famous producer, whose recent release *Louisiana Story* has caused wide comment.

December 5, 1949

RAGAMUFFIN. A moving portrayal of an event in the life of a Polish child.

MOROCCO. Directed by Joseph von Sternberg. Starring Marlene Dietrich. From the Museum of Modern Art Film Library.

January 8, 1950

THE IMMIGRANT. Charlie Chaplin in brilliant satire.

M. A famous German film, directed by Fritz Lang. Starring Peter Lorre. From the Museum of Modern Art Film Library.

Spring Series

February 5, 1950

WIND FROM THE WEST. Produced by Arne Sucksdorff. A delightful legend of Lapland, presented with a touch of fantasy, which marks the work of this great present-day Swedish director.

MURDERERS AMONG US. One of the few films exhibited in all four occupation zones of Germany. The film marks the rebirth of the German motion picture industry in that it was the first production to be released from DEFA Studios in Berlin since the end of the war.

March 5, 1950

PRIVATE LIFE OF A CAT. Directed by Maya Deren. Camera by Alexander Hammid. Music by Gene Forrell. A brilliantly conceived and presented production of great originality.

THE FORGOTTEN VILLAGE. Directed by Alexander Hammid. Story by John Steinbeck. A great film telling an important story of the struggle of the old and the new.

April 2, 1950

CHESS FEVER and MOTHER. To close our series we present these two Russian films by Pudovkin, who is generally considered one of the greatest directors of all time.

Note

DEPENDENT upon the number of memberships sold, a dividend film for each series will be added.

• time and place

PROGRAMS will be presented on the first Sunday of each month, November through April inclusive. Reminder post-cards announcing each month's films will be sent members in advance.

Center Theater

7:30 p.m.

Eighth at Blanchard

• board members

Grace Stevenson, *Chairman*
Barbara Kennedy, *Executive Secretary*
Jane Givan Johnston, *Treasurer*
James Crissey
Ann Hauberg
William James

THE SEATTLE FILM SOCIETY
1329 FIFTH AVENUE
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
PHONE: LA 1152 OR EV 2608

Art in Cinema Society
San Francisco Museum of Art
San Francisco, Calif.

Gentlemen.

I recently came across a library copy of your booklet "Art in Cinema" and was very enthused about it. Is it possible to obtain any copies through your museum? Any information regarding any recent additional information on this subject would be appreciated.

Sincerely -

Ellis Jacobson

127 S. Willaman dr.
Beverly Hills, Cal.

Dear Frank:

I have three, minute-long films with sound track. And they fit in the department of rejections. If you would care for these - ~~you may~~ put me down for them on the advance printing, then I may have sound tracks recorded for my Dixieland films in time and one or two could also be included. I used records by Bunk Johnson, Will Bradley, Turk Murphy

and Pete Dailey

I appreciate your invitation coming again this time after I had let you down so many times recently.

If I don't have sound tracks in time, another possibility would be that I could come up there with my special projector for sound-on-disc. We'll see.

Best wishes,

John

Dear Mr. Stauffer,

Thank you for
sending the program. Enclosed
is the envelope used, showing that
it was sent to my old address.

Please correct my mailing address.
The old house has been torn down.
Suppose you want to get in touch
with me, wishing an immediate
reply? It might be a week or
so before I would get the letter.

My present address is

**11925 Laurel St
Los Angeles 34**

I wish I could see
your program, but perhaps
Raymond Bohaver will show them
here - cordially,
Elwood Pecker

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
SEATTLE 5, WASHINGTON

ORDER FORM

Acknowledgment of Order

We acknowledge with thanks your attached order for instructional materials from this Center. Enclosed you will find a "Confirmation of Booking" slip for each item we are able to reserve for you at this time. Reasons for non-bookings, if any, are explained by symbols on your original order sheet.

IMC-32

(Name)

(Street and Number)

(Town and State)

CENTER
ON

materials to us for

Order Date_____

SHIP TO:

(Name)

(Organization)

(Street and Number)

(Town and State)

SHIP VIA:

- ☐ Parcel Post (Prepaid)
☐ Parcel Post (COD)
☐ Express (Prepaid)
☐ Express (Collect)
☐ Will Call
☐ Other _____

Catalogue Numbers	T I T L E S	Total Rental Fees	Choices of Dates			DO NOT FILL IN ACTION TAKEN*
			1	2	3	

NOTE: Dates in last column above indicate *use dates* for which materials have been booked for you. SYMBOLS: NA—not available on requested dates; DP—print damaged and temporarily out of circulation; WD—item withdrawn from circulation due to obsolescence or other cause; WSC—item also available from Washington State College; CWC—item also available from Central Washington College of Education. If "NA" items are desired for other dates, please submit new request.

(Over)

Catalogue Numbers	TITLES	Total Rental Fees	Choices of Dates			DO NOT FILL IN ACTION TAKEN*
			1	2	3	

From Washington:

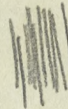
Be gone Dull Care

Hen Hop

Poulette grise

Little Phantasy

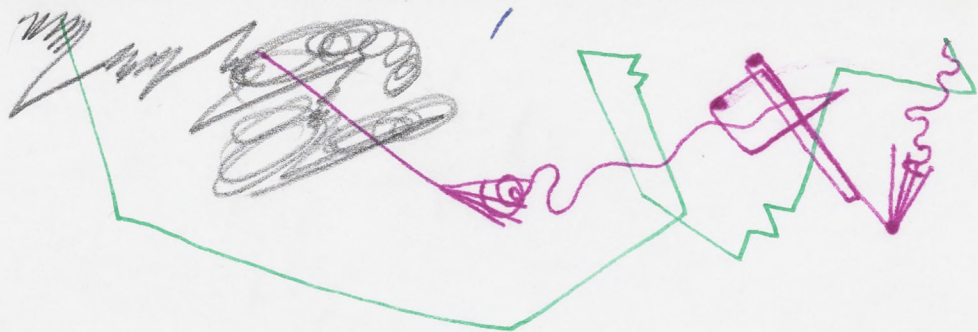
Fiddle de dee



From National Film Board

Loops - for May 5th





Dear Frank,

You have relieved my
mind as well. Thanks a million.
If you airmail "Color Fragments"
the morning of the 27th that will
be swell.

I phoned John + read him
your letter + he promised to get in
touch with you.

John has a sound track
for his 6 Television shorts, but he
may also come up, since interest

2

is high, + a word with a station director or two, after the show, might be to mutual advantage.

I assure you — you will love John's 6 television films, They are on an 800' reel. I think the running time is about 18 minutes. He has since made 2 others + may get tracks for them.

Actually they are not rejected spots. At least 3 have been accepted + televised, K.L.A.C. paid him \$15 to run one yesterday (E & O — children's number) not on the 6 reel. However, they have been rejected also — so its O.K. to say so

I don't know of any more interesting
TV material hereabouts, but have
 a hunch it could be found.

Raymond Kohauer may make a 16
 print for the Oppiger-Ortleib film.
 H. S. C. may make a sound track.

Erven Jourdan has a new film he
 promised to show me, called "sky-
 house."

John + I were hoping Harry Smith
 could get the Be Bop Group on a
 disc - thence to a sound track on
 film - so we could share in the
 enjoyment.

Our show at the Coronet
 opens on the 29th + runs
 30, 31, 1, + 2 with luck
 we hope.

Thank you for your kind words
 regarding my own film —

cordially
 Elwood Tucker

— am getting final print
 of "Famela Boden's Abstract
 Forms" silent, B+W, about
 325 feet - next Saturday (April 29th)

also have a color record
 of James Whitney pastel
 drawing about 300 feet.

In case you need more
 material for your film programs.

Rohauer wants to show
 them at the Crown Theatre soon -

Dear Mr. Stauffer

Color Fragment is on its way
to you with this letter.

Although you have scheduled
it for May 26th, I promised to send
it early, to fill in if necessary or
other programs.

In return for the co-operation
I want you to refrain from loaning
it out to friends, of which I am sure
you have many. Please also let
me know immediately, when you
will definitely return it.

Indefinite arrangements are not
to my liking & but I have a
memory like an elephant for
anyone who does me a kindness.

I look forward to seeing your
~~films~~ when & if, Raymond
Rohauer will show them here.

I just purchased the one &
only first copy of "Beyond Dull
Care" in Los Angeles. I put my
order in after meeting McClure here.

It is Tremendous...
the nearest thing to pure
energy I've experienced in art.
The images drip, blast, drop,
slide & explode into sound.

2

near the end one no longer
sees & listens, one perceives &
experiences the impact, like a
current of electricity going
thru the whole body.

I took it three times, one right
after another, ecstatically.

I felt I was sharing something
of the union of God with nature.
What are the saints talking about?
Isn't it a concentrated union of
different functions of consciousness?

The throbbing synchronization of
this film really does something for
me. It is so united that suddenly
it unites everything else for me.

I disappear in the unity of life.

Cordially

Elwood Decker

11925 Lawler St.

Los Angeles 34

Dear Frank,

Thanks for expressing the
films back by air. I finally located
them in time for the opening performance,
so all well that ends well " but it
took hours of calls to trace the films
because you had got my street number
partly twisted around - & the girl in

the
office
had no
record.
Finally
the driver
came in.

FROM
SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF ART
Civic Center ♦ San Francisco, Calif.

To
ELWOOD DECKER
11952 LAWLER ST.
LOS ANGELES 34, CALIF.

should have been 11925

my sister saw + liked your show. She preferred "The Quiet One" to the comedies - The Philip Morris short especially of the television numbers all of which she enjoyed. She thought the dance film was "exceptionally junk" but she is just not much interested in experimental film. She wasn't sure whether she would like "Color Fragments" if it were longer.

She stunned me by saying you had over 500 people + some standing. gulp! Dad, I am awed. about 60 came to our opening, + we were grateful for that many. They liked it. 40 came the next evening + were not so enthusiastic. It runs for five days -

We had no advertising whatever in the Sunday papers, but maybe the word will get around. By the way, we are renting

Dots - Loops - & Beyond Dull Care - all for \$5 an evening from Dennis Film Lab here in town. You might also take advantage of their services - address:

2506 $\frac{1}{2}$ W. 7th St.

Los Angeles (I forgot zone)

phone Dunkirk 43722

My sister sent me also your program notes. Will you please send John a copy? (His wife wanted me to ask you -)

most cordial regards,

How did you like John's

television films? They certainly

are way ahead of the old stuff visually -

Elwood Decker

11925 Lawler St.

Los Angeles 34, Calif

Dear Frank,

Thank you for the extra program
for John; & thanks for your criticism.
I know it comes from experience, & an
earnest desire to acquaint the public,
as gracefully as possible, with experimental
& abstract films.

I think that possibly, with the
exception of one or two programs, you are
right at present. My own view looks

to the future when there will be more
psychological variety in abstract film,

when the dimensional progression of
qualities is better understood + when
there is an awakened interest in the
full meaning of the word, Abstraction.

You are welcome to use "Color

Fragments" on the 20th Will express
it to you about the 17th.

Did Mrs. Moholy Nagy see my film?

I want to rent Black White & Grey
sometime. Her recent book about Moholy
has given me great comfort. What a rare
artist, with such love for the principle
& the people too!

I still am very curious about Falkenstein's
Articulation + metal's Form Evolution -
If they saw my Color Fragments I wonder
what they thought?

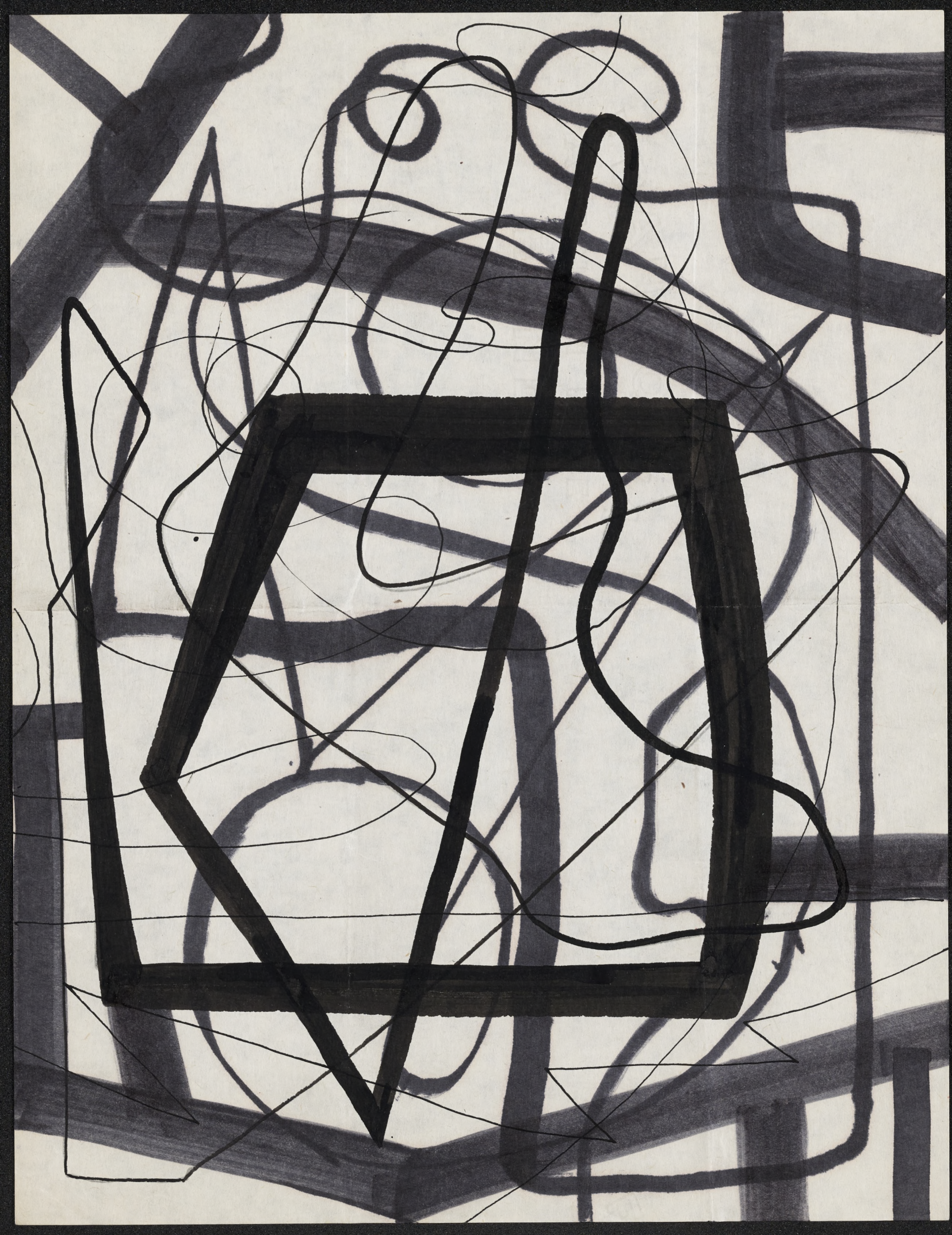
It's too bad we do not live in the same
town - I feel a kinship & would like
very much to see their films - What
did you think of articulation & Form
Evolution? How long? Method? Sound?

Incidentally Stravinsky's late of Spring numbers
1 + 8 went well with Color Fragments.

cordially,

Elwood Dicker

the film record of James's drawings was well
received, although no music was played
with it & it didn't move. Have you
ever seen his fine pastels?



Dear Frank,

my mind has been going round
in circles wondering why you have not
paid the rental fees.

The 2 rental fees for "Color
Fragments" only amounts to \$10.

It has been over two months since
I first sent you color fragments. Since you
manage to get your audience to pay in
advance, how about sharing the convenience?
at least, if you are in a desperate
situation, be kind enough to explain.

cordially,

Elwood Decker
11925 Lawler St.
Los Angeles 34, Calif.



Dear Frank,
Thanks for the
reassuring note
cordially,

Elwood
Decker



Dear Friend,
I received your letter of the 14th and was
glad to hear from you. I am well and
hope this finds you the same. I have
not much news to write at present.
I am still in the hospital and am
not yet able to go out. I am
feeling better, however, and am
able to write a few lines.
I am, dear friend, very truly,
Your friend,
John Doe

Dear Frank,

Discovered too late that there was
no pick up on the 17th so had
to send this air mail.

would appreciate prompt return
after your show, & remittances
due.

please tell me about "articulation"
& "Form evolution!"

most cordial regards,

Elwood Pecker
11925 Lawler St.
Los Angeles 34, Calif.